

Pirates in Action Community Service Program

Rockport-Fulton High School

What is Pirates in Action?

Pirates in Action is a community service recognition program designed to encourage Rockport-Fulton High School students to give back to their community, develop leadership skills, explore career interests, and build a meaningful record of service throughout high school.

Students may begin earning and documenting approved volunteer service hours during their freshman year. Students who complete the required number of documented service hours for their graduating class will receive the **Pirates in Action silver cord** to wear at graduation.

Graduation Cord Requirements

The Pirates in Action service-hour requirement will be phased in by graduating class:

- **Class of 2027:** 20 documented service hours
- **Class of 2028:** 40 documented service hours
- **Class of 2029:** 50 documented service hours
- **Class of 2030 and beyond:** 60 documented service hours

Students may earn qualifying service hours throughout their high school career. Hours do not need to be completed within one school year.

Beginning with the **Class of 2030**, students will have all four years of high school to complete the required **60 hours of community service**.

Why Volunteer?

Community service gives students opportunities to:

- Strengthen their community and develop leadership skills
- Build experience for college, scholarship, and job applications
- Explore potential careers and areas of interest
- Build relationships with community organizations
- Experience the personal reward of helping others

- Develop responsibility, initiative, and a lifelong commitment to service

What Counts as Community Service?

Qualifying service must be **unpaid volunteer work performed outside of regular class requirements** and provide a benefit to the community or an approved nonprofit, school, civic, or service organization.

Examples may include:

- Volunteer service with an approved 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
- School-sponsored volunteer activities completed outside regular class time
- Community events and service projects
- Volunteer service with libraries, shelters, hospitals, food pantries, community organizations, or similar organizations
- Church-sponsored community outreach or service projects performed outside regular worship services
- Mission trips or other approved service activities
- Other community service opportunities approved by the Pirates in Action program

When students are unsure whether an activity qualifies, they should receive approval **before completing the service whenever possible**.

What Does Not Count?

The following activities do not qualify toward Pirates in Action service hours:

- Volunteering during regular church or worship services, such as choir or Sunday school
- Paid employment, paid internships, babysitting, or other compensated work
- Regular club meetings
- Court-ordered community service
- Activities completed as part of a regular class requirement
- Hours without proper documentation or verification
- Hours that are submitted after the established deadline
- Activities that primarily benefit the student or the student's immediate family rather than the community

Tracking and Submitting Hours

All Pirates in Action service hours must be recorded through **Track It Forward**.

Students are responsible for:

1. Joining the RFHS Pirates in Action group in Track It Forward.
2. Logging volunteer hours within **30 days of completing the service activity**.
3. Providing accurate information about the organization, activity, date, and number of hours served.
4. Obtaining proper verification when required.
5. Ensuring all required hours are submitted by the senior-year deadline of April 15th.

Parents may not verify or sign off on their student's service hours.

Hours that cannot be verified may not be accepted.

Service Hour Guidelines

To encourage students to serve in a variety of ways:

- Students are encouraged to volunteer with multiple organizations and explore different types of community service.
- Students may begin accumulating hours during high school and continue adding to their total until the senior-year deadline.
- Hours completed before entering high school do not count toward the Pirates in Action graduation cord requirement.
- Service hours cannot be transferred from another student.

Student Expectations

Students participating in Pirates in Action are representing Rockport-Fulton High School and are expected to:

- Arrive on time and fulfill the commitment they have made
- Dress appropriately for the volunteer activity
- Follow all rules and instructions of the organization
- Treat staff, volunteers, and community members respectfully
- Accurately report their service hours
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity throughout the program

Falsifying volunteer hours, signatures, documentation, or other service records may result in the hours being denied and may result in dismissal from the Pirates in Action program.

Safety First

Students should only volunteer in environments in which they feel safe and comfortable.

Students should not place themselves in unsafe situations or remain alone in unfamiliar settings when they feel uncomfortable. If a student feels unsafe at any time, they should leave the situation and immediately notify a parent/guardian, supervising adult, or the Pirates in Action coordinator.

Planning Your Hours

Students are strongly encouraged to begin serving early rather than waiting until senior year.

For students working toward the long-term **60-hour requirement**, a simple goal is approximately:

Freshman Year: Begin exploring service opportunities

Sophomore Year: Work toward approximately 15–20 cumulative hours

Junior Year: Work toward approximately 35–40 cumulative hours

Senior Year: Complete the remaining hours before the final deadline

These are suggested benchmarks only. Students may complete their hours at any pace as long as they meet their graduating class requirement by the final deadline.

Senior-Year Deadline- April 15th

Students seeking the Pirates in Action graduation cord must have all required volunteer hours **submitted, documented, and approved by the program's annual spring deadline.**

Late or incomplete submissions may not be accepted because graduation cords must be verified and ordered prior to graduation.

Remember

Community service is about more than earning a graduation cord. Pirates in Action is intended to help students develop a habit of giving back, discover ways they can contribute to their community, and graduate with meaningful experiences they can carry into college, the workforce, and adulthood.

Start early. Serve consistently. Make an impact.

For questions about qualifying organizations, service activities, or Track It Forward, contact the **Pirates in Action Coordinator at the RF Education Foundation.**

Email piratesinaction@rfeducationfoundation.org

Website: rfeducationfoundation.org/pirates-in-action